

Analyzing the role of ChatGPT as a writing assistant at higher education level: A systematic review of the literature

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Abstract

This study examines the role of ChatGPT as a writing assistant in academia through a systematic literature review of the 30 most relevant articles. Since its release in November 2022, ChatGPT has become the most debated topic among scholars and is also being used by many users from different fields. Many articles, reviews, blogs, and opinion essays have been published in which the potential role of ChatGPT as a writing assistant is discussed. For this systematic review, 550 articles published six months after ChatGPT's release (December 2022 to May 2023) were collected based on specific keywords, and the final 30 most relevant articles were finalized through PRISMA flowchart. The analyzed literature identifies different opinions and scenarios associated with using ChatGPT as a writing assistant and how to interact with it. Findings show that artificial intelligence (AI) in education is a part of the ongoing development process, and its latest chatbot, ChatGPT is a part of it. Therefore, the education process, particularly academic writing, has both opportunities and challenges in adopting ChatGPT as a writing assistant. The need is to understand its role as an aid and facilitator for both the learners and instructors, as chatbots are relatively beneficial devices to facilitate, create ease and support the academic process. However, academia should revisit and update students' and teachers' training, policies, and assessment ways in writing courses for academic integrity and originality, like plagiarism issues, AI-generated assignments, online/home-based exams, and auto-correction challenges.